



BiH Dayton Project



Op-ed by Commissioner Oliver Varhelyi: “We are all at geopolitical crossroads the EU door is open for BiH”

 November 29, 2022

The EU Delegation to BiH today [republished](#) an op-ed by Commissioner Varhelyi that had been published in Oslobođenje, Nezavisne novine, and Večernji list. According to the piece, the European Commission’s recommendation that BiH be given EU candidate status “is without conditions but with high expectations and a clear message. The political elite must prove they want to advance on the EU path and are ready to deliver much-needed reforms.”

The full text of the op-ed is below.

Last month, the Commission recommended to grant candidate status to Bosnia and Herzegovina on the understanding that a number of steps are taken.

This recommendation is our European offer for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina who have long wished for this. The recommendation is without conditions but with high expectations and a clear message. The political elite must prove they want to advance on the EU path and are ready to deliver much-needed reforms. Our door is open.

Following the general elections on 2 October, we trust all institutions to be formed swiftly, so the necessary reform steps are taken forward without delay. The European Council will discuss our recommendation for candidate status, maybe as early as December.

Several specific decisions are pending with the outgoing Council of Ministers, including adopting strategies on migration and asylum and the fight against organized crime. Also, endorsing amendments for the integrity of the judiciary and a new law on courts or taking all measures needed to put the EUROPOL contact point in operation finally are all awaiting.

These reforms will demonstrate to the EU Member States that Bosnia and Herzegovina is serious in its wish to join the EU. These are not for the sake of Brussels, but they are there to improve the daily life of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When there is a will, there is a way – as demonstrated by adopting the amendments on public procurement and with joining the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. We also welcome the progress in managing migration, thanks to the work of the Ministry of Security in improving coordination and boosting international cooperation. Bosnia and Herzegovina should continue developing sustainable migration management and asylum system.

The work does not stop with the recommendation for candidate status. On the contrary, we expect Bosnia and Herzegovina to intensify efforts on all the well-known 14 key priorities in the Commission Opinion. This is the only road toward EU membership and necessary for opening accession talks.

As part of this, it is also time to finalize the constitutional and electoral reforms. This is of utmost priority to guarantee equality to all citizens, without discrimination, and to ensure the functionality of State institutions. We are there to support finding a solution in line with EU standards and values.

We are also there to help Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens still this winter to tackle the energy crisis, we set up an energy support package for the Western Balkans, including 70 million euros in grants for vulnerable families and small businesses to address the increasing energy costs immediately.

In the medium term, we will invest in interconnectors and renewable energy projects, notably in the wind, solar, and biomass, so that all Bosnia and Herzegovina's people can access clean energy and clean air.

The EU is the first trade partner and donor in Bosnia and Herzegovina. EU funds are already transforming the country. The Corridor Vc motorway and railway will facilitate mobility and better connect Bosnia and Herzegovina to the rest of Europe. But this is not all. Our Economic and Investment Plan is designed to support the green and digital transition of the country.

We are all at a geopolitical crossroad. The place of Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the EU. Granting candidate status is an offer from the EU to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and comes once in a time and with high expectations. Now all the eyes will be on the political elite of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who needs to deliver on EU reforms. You are part of the European family. We want to see your citizens have all means and possibilities to build their future in this beautiful country and see Bosnia and Herzegovina, our ally to take its place in the European Union.

I look forward to working with renewed energy with the newly elected authorities, the civil society, and the businesses of Bosnia and Herzegovina to get there.

Op-ed by Commissioner Oliver Varhelyi

« Vučević: Serbia respects integrity of BiH, RS within it – SRNA

Tegeltija: Confirmation of candidate status would relax relations in BiH – SRNA »

RELATED POSTS



Tegeltija: Confirmation of candidate status would relax relations in BiH – SRNA

📅 November 29, 2022



EU Delegation calls on BiH to ratify, implement Berlin Process agreements – N1

📅 November 15, 2022



RS's 28th Report to the UN Security Council

📅 October 31, 2022

BIH DAYTON PROJECT

This website is a resource for journalists, scholars, and policy makers in search of accurate and timely information about Bosnia and Herzegovina and its governmental bodies, entities, and constituent peoples.

This website presents materials representing a variety of viewpoints with respect to Bosnia and Herzegovina. This material is distributed by McGinnis Lochridge on behalf of Republika Srpska. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

The materials on this website do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the Government of Republika Srpska.

All Rights Reserved 2021.

Proudly powered by WordPress | Theme: Recent News by Candid Themes.